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Town of Spaniard's Bay Recognizes a First

Spaniard's Bay, NL, January 5, 2007- The Town of Spaniard's Bay has designated Spaniard's Bay United Church as the first municipal heritage site in the town recognizing its historical significance to the area. With this designation comes promotion on the Canadian Register of Historic Places..

The Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador (HFNL) is working with municipalities to recognize local heritage and to help promote these places. A description of the Spaniard's Bay United Church along with photos can be found on the website at www.historicplaces.ca.

The designation of this site is representative of the new opportunity for municipalities to recognize their heritage. "Municipal designations allow towns to protect and preserve the special places in their community, whether it be buildings, structures, or lands," explains Dale Jarvis, Provincial Registrar with the HFNL.

Nestled amongst a small green space with mature trees, the church is found at the foot of Church Hill. It was constructed in 1894, and was the first Methodist church in Spaniard's Bay. Built after the violent conflict of the 19th century between the various religious denominations in the area, Spaniard's Bay United Church is a surviving example of vernacular Gothic Revival architecture in the area. Built with local materials this small church has a steeply pitched gable roof and a protruding tower with a tall spire at the gable end.

Also interesting is the fact that when the church was built, a time capsule was placed in the foundation. Inside the time capsule were some copies of the Monthly Greeting (a church newsletter), church papers, an account of the cornerstone laying ceremony, a few coins of the colony and the names of the trustees. The time capsule is there still.

The church also has a small, flagstone-walled water-way running through the property, which was created deliberately by diverting a little river to run alongside the building. Also of significance is the churches location directly across the road from the Atlantic Ocean, making it highly visible to mariners because of its unimpeded view of the water.

HFNL supports municipal designation of heritage sites and listing on the Canadian Register. "We've had great feedback from this campaign, with towns like Spaniard's Bay taking the initiative in designation," says Jarvis. "I think every town has a site of local importance that could be listed on the Canadian Register"

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About the Heritage Foundation

To view designated structures, visit www.heritagefoundation.ca. HFNL was established in 1984 to stimulate an understanding of and an appreciation for the architectural heritage of the

province and to support and contribute to the preservation and restoration of buildings of architectural or historical significance in the province. Since its creation, the Foundation has designated 261 buildings as Registered Heritage Structures. It has disbursed more than \$1.1 million in restoration grants across Newfoundland and Labrador, with an estimated economic spin off of close to eight times that amount.